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They Argue While Cuba Burns

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WASHINGTON

Two strong voices in the United States Senate, both close to the ear of President Kennedy, are poles apart on their thinking about inter-American policies — particularly with respect to dealing with Communist Cuba — these days in the nation's capital.

The voices are those of Sen. J. W. Fulbright, Arkansas Democrat and chairman of the powerful Foreign Relations Committee, and Florida Sen. George Smathers, long recognized as the Senate's foremost spokesman for Latin American affairs.

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Differences between the two senators over Cuba and the rest of Latin America may well lead to a break for either of them with President Kennedy as next year's congressional elections draw closer. Cuba may be a campaign issue.

Fulbright, though his committee chairmanship holds immense power in Washington. No treaty can be ratified, no money appropriated or legislation passed without the conduct of foreign affairs and so ambassadors confirmed without first being approved by his committee.

The Foreign Relations Committee also can call in a secretary of state or any other official and chew him out.



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be considered shoddy formation of policy or faulty execution of it.

Fulbright is of the opinion that the problem of Cuba can be solved only through the collective efforts of the Organization of American States (OAS).

He argues that neither Cuba nor Laos alone constitutes a threat to the national security of the United States or to the long-term success of American policies.

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Smathers, who customarily holds high respect for his colleague's keen mind and sound judgment, believes those who follow the "patience" line with Cuba today — including those of President Kennedy's closest advisers — are not realistically dealing with Latin America.

He argues vigorously that the United States must make it clear to Cuba to abide by its solemn treaty obligations by calling for swift enforcement of the Rio Treaty and the Caracas De-

claration against Communist intervention in Cuba.

Smathers declares that by now it should be clear to all senators that Fidel Castro hopes to make his Red regime permanent in Cuba by "applying another Soviet trick" — the formula of postponement of action, toleration of the status quo and then acceptance "in fact" if not in law.

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Events in Cuba, Smathers feels, have crystallized the American public's opposition to communism more than any happening in our time, he believes — and the heavy flow of mail from across the country to nearly all congressmen backs him up. He says that the U. S. public is ready and willing to drive communism away from its post 20 miles from the coast of Florida.

However, Fulbright continues to caution against the dangers of yielding to emotional demands for matching immediately any Communist victories in Cuba or Latin America. He declares that by "exaggerating their significance and reacting to them emotionally, we dilute our national style and undermine our policies."

To many people in Washington and elsewhere in the Western Hemisphere, the danger posed by Castroism hasn't been exaggerated in the slightest.